



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 20 2016

OFFICE OF
WATER

Ms. Erin Brockovich, Consumer Protection Advocate
Mr. Ken Cook, President
Environmental Working Group
1436 U Street NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Ms. Brockovich and Mr. Cook:

Thank you for your August 16, 2016, letter. I appreciate you letting me know your concerns about hexavalent chromium in drinking water. Ensuring safe drinking water for all Americans is a top priority for the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, all public drinking water systems are required to conduct monitoring to determine compliance with the maximum contaminant level for total chromium of 0.1 milligrams per liter (mg/L). Total chromium includes both trivalent and hexavalent chromium.

When the EPA established the MCL for total chromium in 1991 there was inadequate evidence to inform the human cancer potential of hexavalent chromium via the ingestion exposure pathway. The MCL for total chromium was based upon noncancer toxicity effects associated with hexavalent chromium exposure, since hexavalent chromium was recognized as being more toxic than the trivalent form.

The agency is evaluating more recent scientific information on the potential health effects from oral exposure to hexavalent chromium in drinking water. EPA's National Center for Environmental Assessment is actively engaged in an evaluation of the available literature regarding the potential health effects that may occur as a result of exposure to hexavalent chromium and is currently developing a health assessment through the Integrated Risk Information System Program. The agency expects that a draft version of the health assessment document will be released for public comment prior to external peer review in 2017.

In addition, the agency has compiled monitoring data for hexavalent chromium collected under the third Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation program from 2013 to 2015 to understand its occurrence in drinking water systems across the nation. The UCMR program provides the agency and other interested parties with scientifically valid data on the frequency and level of occurrence of unregulated contaminants in public drinking water systems. These data are one of the primary sources of occurrence and exposure information the agency uses to develop regulatory decisions for these contaminants. The UCMR data collected is publicly available through EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr>.

The monitoring data obtained from UCMR3 as well as the information provided in the health effects assessment of hexavalent chromium will inform EPA's decision as to whether or not a new drinking water regulation for hexavalent chromium or a revision to the current total chromium standard is warranted.

Again, thank you for letting me know about your concerns about hexavalent chromium in drinking water. The agency is working diligently to gather all necessary information to allow the rulemaking decision process to be based on the best available science. The agency remains committed on improving public health through promoting access to safe drinking water for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Grevatt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Grevatt, Director
Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water